



Meteor



Heraut

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Around USAG Benelux

USAG Benelux

Meteor-Heraut transformation

The U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Meteor-Heraut newspaper is being published in an electronic format as new publisher negotiations are ongoing.

Our readers will be able to print the electronic version disseminated via email and available on the USAG Benelux website (www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil) during this period.

The Meteor-Heraut staff would like to thank all of our readers across the Benelux for their understanding and support during this transition period.

Voter Assistance

Americans across the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux needing voter assistance may contact their local voter action hotlines across the Benelux:

USAG Benelux DSN 366-6238

USAG Brussels DSN: 3689697

USAG Schinnen DSN: 360-7309

Assistance is available via email at USAREURVote@hq.1perscom.army.mil.

Gas prices rise

August gas prices jumped 17 cents per gallon in Belgium for an unleaded 95 grade Total Fina fuel card sold on SHAPE and the Army Air Force Exchange Service.

The 200-liter gas card rose from \$156.75 to \$165.88 or \$2.98 per gallon to \$3.15 per gallon.

Unleaded 98 grade saw the largest increase, jumping 29 cents per gallon as fuel card prices climbed from \$163 to \$178.58 or \$3.10 per gallon to \$3.39 per gallon.

Diesel fuel card costs jumped to \$162.04 in August, a \$6.64 increase over July's price of \$155.50, an increase of 14 cent increase per gallon from \$2.95 to \$3.09.

In the Netherlands, new sell prices for mid-grade and premium unleaded fuel were set at the "floor" selling price, per AAFES Board of Director's policy.

Super unleaded rose to \$3.274 per gallon and super-plus unleaded climbed to \$3.529 per gallon and diesel hit \$3.077 per gallon.

100-mile March

Heat forces Nijmegen to cancel

By LaDonna Davis

Schinnen Public Affairs Office

NIJMEGEN, Netherlands- For the first time in 90 years, the historical Nijmegen International Four-Days March was cancelled, June 18, due to the deaths of two Dutch participants and hundreds of injuries stemming from higher-than-normal temperatures on the first day of the annual 100-mile march.

Temperatures climbing in the low to mid 90s (+30 C), with forecast for continued high temperatures the rest of the week, coupled with the deaths and heat-related injuries to participants and spectators forced officials to cancel this year's event.

"To our dismay, on the first walking day, two of our walkers have died. We feel sympathy for the families of the deceased," said Wim Jansen, chairman of the Four Days March. "Because the temperatures rose steeply in the late afternoon, hundreds of people became sick, both walkers and spectators. This has imposed great pressure on the medical services and, for us; the well-being of walkers as well as spectators always comes first."

"We found out the medical units and police couldn't cope with the many, many people caught by the heat and needing medical treatment," said Wilma Blom, head of the press center



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

U.S. Soldiers pack-up their gear and get ready to head home after only one day of marching in the Nijmegen Four-Day March. The march was cancelled due to two deaths and multiple injuries which stemmed from the high-temperatures which ranged from the low to mid 90s.

at Camp Heumensoord. "I know all of the soldiers are disappointed, but on the other hand, they saw what happened on the route and at the camp. They heard the ambulances; they have seen their colleagues suffer so they know there was something really going on."

See Nijmegen, page 7

Belgian EOD cleans up ammo site

World War I munitions being removed after being buried for decades

Story and Photos by J.D. Hardesty

Meteor-Heraut Editor

The fallout from World War I munitions is still being felt across Belgium.

A 12-man Belgian Explosive Ordnance Disposal team at the former German ammunition bunker at Mevergnies-Attre is digging up 350-400 tons WWI artillery and mortar rounds are being removed for disposal.

According to Belgian Air Force Commandant Jan Savelkoels, commander of a 12-man Belgian EOD team near Attre, the battalion receives 3,500 requests, mostly from farmers in the Ypres Salient area, to

See Munitions, page 7

A Belgian Explosive Ordnance Disposal team is removing 350-400 tons of German World War I munitions stockpiled at the Mevergnies-Attre depot for nearly 90 years. The artillery and mortar rounds were being stockpiled before being sent to the Ypres Salient.





Col. Dean A. Nowowiejski
USAG Benelux Commander

There are several anniversaries and themes that we all want to remember in August.

First, it's back to school time, and we celebrate the establishment of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools here in Europe 60 years ago.

Nowowiejski Notes

As you parents go through the paces of preparing for another school year with your children, I encourage you to pause and reflect on the great value of a DoDDS education. The fact that we have such a quality school system to support us overseas is one of those amazing benefits of military service.

We have benefit of a competitive academic experience which rivals the best local school districts in the U.S., but adds the perspective of living abroad to personal experience, and for our high schools in the Benelux, the distinct advantage of classmates from partner countries that give the breadth of international viewpoints.

Truly, our high school students at AFNORTH, Brussels American, and SHAPE are American student ambassadors.

We want to thank and honor our

dedicated DoDDS educators. They live abroad year after year in service to tomorrow's leaders, educating and developing the next generation.

I encourage you to comply with all the registration and immunization requirements of your local school. This month is, after all, National Immunization Awareness Month.

Please check for your school's information at: <http://www.eu.dodea.edu/>.

Thanks to all of the summer hire employees who worked in the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux.

Our team sincerely hopes you had a great and beneficial work experience.

We appreciate your contribution to our communities of Chièvres, Brussels, and Schinnen at this critical time of European summer vacations and a hiring freeze.

Please help your parents and friends understand the Benelux garrisons and the good we can do for joint American communities in support of NATO. We were glad to have you on the team, and wish you great success in the year ahead.

The observance of Women's Equality Day Aug. 26 commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920 which gave women the right to vote and additionally calls attention to women's continuing efforts toward full equality.

Sixty-five years ago the Women's Army Corps was established. Beginning with that foundation in the Army, women continue to lead and serve across the USAG Benelux, both as military servicemembers, as well as Department of Defense civilian and host nation employees.

August is a month to remember and to celebrate your great contributions and accomplishments. Thank you.

McIntire Selected DoDDS-Europe Isles District Superintendent

WIESBADEN, Germany — Diana J. Ohman, director of Department of Defense Dependents Schools-Europe, announced July 24, the selection of Dr. Ronald G. McIntire as the superintendent of the Isles District Office.

McIntire is presently the superintendent of the DoDDS-Europe Bavaria District, where he has served since August 2001.

He will assume his new position in August.

The Isles District superintendent oversees 17 Department of Defense Education Activity schools in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium and Bahrain.

McIntire was raised in Colorado and calls Boerne, Texas, home. He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Western State College of Colorado, and a doctorate from the University of California at Los Angeles.

He also completed post-doctoral study at Stanford University, where his work concentrated on the role of the arts in education.

McIntire began his career in education as a classroom teacher in Las Vegas, Nev., and progressed through the ranks of professional educators, occupying positions of increasingly greater responsibility and challenge.

He was both professor and associate dean at the University of Houston, and has taught graduate level courses at Baylor University, the University of Colorado, and Portland State University.

McIntire's administrative experience includes positions as deputy superintendent of the Houston Schools, superintendent of schools in Park City, Utah, and superintendent of the Wichita Public Schools, Kan.

In addition, he has served as the DoDDS-Europe Brussels District superintendent.

McKiernan Sends #14-06

Wireless devices in sensitive areas

1. Our ability to protect sensitive information is vital to sustaining our warfighting capability. Evolving technology and the growing use of wireless devices, however, put this information at risk. We must always protect this information from being compromised.

2. Many of us use cell phones, BlackBerries, and other types of personal electronic devices (PEDs) to maintain situational awareness. Although these devices are very helpful, there are vulnerabilities associated with their use. We must be aware of the vulnerabilities and apply appropriate operations security countermeasures to mitigate the risk.

3. Even when the user turns it off, a wireless device can be remotely turned on to eavesdrop and retransmit conversations, typically within 20 feet of the device. Because there are no external indications of active use, the user will not know the device has been turned on.

4. To prevent the compromise of sensitive information, personnel will not carry cell phones, BlackBerries,



General David D. McKiernan
CINC USAREUR

or PEDs that contain a cell phone (wireless devices) into sensitive areas, even when they are turned off, without the approval of an intelligence community colonel, GS-14, or higher. A sensitive area is any area where classified or unclassified sensitive information is discussed. These include but are not limited to sensitive compartmented information facilities (SCIFs), offices with open storage, conference rooms, and other locations so designated by the unit commander or staff principal.

5. In accordance with the policy in Army in Europe Command Policy Letter 33, commanders and staff principals will—

☐ Survey and designate the sensitive areas under their jurisdiction. Visible signs must be placed at the entrances

to these areas.

☐ Enforce the prohibition of cell phones, BlackBerries, and similar devices in sensitive areas.

☐ Provide an appropriate storage facility near the entrances to sensitive areas to temporarily store wireless devices.

☐ Take advantage of cell-phone blocker technology to protect sensitive areas as prescribed by AE Supplement 1 to AR 25-1, paragraph E-11 (Spectrum Management).

Lessons Learned website continues to change

The Lessons Learned website is continuously redesigning and adding content.

Research tools with a thesaurus, acronym and search capability have been added, along with links to the current News services like CNN, Stars and Stripes, and the Early Bird.

There are special links to all of the USAREUR, Department of Defense and Joint publications as well as links to the schools that write these regulations and FMs.

Other links include Lessons Learned sites and a special section just for Family Readiness Groups. New products are always being added in the After Action Report library such as: Anti-Terrorism, Force

Protection and the Consequence Management Initial Impressions Report for 2004-2005. Many new and relevant CALL Products have been added:

☐ LWN(U) <http://call.army.mil>

☐ LWN(C) <http://call.army.smil.mil/>

A new service called the Lessons Learned News Brief has been added. It is similar to the Early Bird but is focused on the USAREUR area of responsibility gathered from internet news agencies.

Changes are on both the NIPRNET and SIPRNET websites.

The websites names have changed to:

☐ <https://lessonslearned.eur.army.mil>

☐ <http://lessonslearned.hqusareur.army.smil.mil>.

Munitions...from page 1



Commandant Jan Savelkoels, commander of a Belgian Explosive Ordnance Disposal team removing German World War I munitions at the Mevergnies-Attre depot, looks over degrading 90-year-old shells casing stockpiled at the ammo dump. The 12-person team started excavating the 600-square-meter site April 24 to the remove 350-400 ton stockpile by October.

remove munitions across the country - many of the munitions are from World War I, resulting in about 300 tons of circa 1915-1919 ordnance.

The Mevergnies-Attre, of which an estimated 5 percent is chemical or toxic weapons suspect, contains more munitions than the EOD Battalion disposes of annually.

The Belgian EOD has been recovering ammunition from farmers' fields and old German bunkers and depots and disposing of it for years.

In 1915, the Ypres Salient exploded into a stalemated battle of trench warfare where hundreds of thousands of tons of artillery rounds, mortars and mines rounds scared the hillside of the last significant city in Belgium not in German hands during World War I.

With 10 to 20 artillery shells pock marking the battlefield every minute for nearly four years with many containing poisonous mustard (yperite), chorine, phosgene, diphosgene gases, the "dew of death" left its mass casualty mark. An estimated 124,000 tons of chemical agent had been expended by the end of the war inflicting 92,000 casualties.

In 1925, the Geneva Protocol banned the use of chemical and biological weapons in war, however remnants of both gas-laden and ordinary exploded and unexploded ordnance that killed an estimated 1.3 million allied and enemy troops are being found annually by farmers in the area. Unexploded shells simply buried themselves and, with erosion, work their way back to the surface.

With the war raging, activity at Mevergnies-Attre depot increased. A Catholic priest, Father Thesin, who was a cousin of Belgian Air Force Colonel Joseph Daumerie (who Caserne

Daumerie is named after), had organized an intelligence network as part of the resistance force in the Hainaut Province. His reports to London in January 1918 went unheeded. He continued his reports until he was arrested in February.

According to Savelkoels, on March 8, around 3 p.m., a German plane landed near Chièvres for a few minutes. The crew, all British, were wearing German uniforms and dropped off a saboteur who spent the night in an isolated farm nearby.

"Nobody knows how he managed to complete his mission, but at 7:04 a.m., on March 9, the first shell ignited the first of 780 wagons of munitions" that had arrived at the Mevergnies-Attre depot to support its troops for one more push along the four-mile Ypres line, he said. Explosions continued for the next four hours.

The loss of munitions prevented the Germans from conducting another major offensive in the Ypres Salient.

Savelkoels explained that Belgium didn't have mining units in 1919, as they tried to remove ammunition stockpiles, but, with no ordnance disposal experience, the stockpiles were buried after several accidents and explosions.

The Germans stockpile of nearly 1,000 tons of munitions at the Mevergnies-Attre depot, remained buried until the Belgian military again tried to "de-mine" the artillery and mortar rounds from 1950-1954. Savelkoels estimated 512 tons were destroyed during this four-year period, but toxic munitions contaminations forced these early EOD troops to stop operations and again bury the stockpile.

Savelkoels and his crew are now finishing what saboteur started nearly 90 years ago, removing an average of three tons of German mortar and artillery rounds from the Mevergnies-Attre depot daily – the largest of which has been a 25 centimeter artillery shell. He said the munitions the Germans started storing there in 1917 "are bad quality."

Original estimates reflected 60 tons of munitions over 130 square meters, however the EOD team has unearthed six trenches at the site where the shells were buried two meters deep and were covered with a layer of concrete. While the stockpiled of German munitions is spread over a 600 square meter area. They have found one British and several French rounds as well.

"We estimate there is still more than 300 tons of ordnance here," he said as his crew continues excavating the site which began April 24 and is scheduled to complete in early October. "We clean and identify each round so that it can be disposed of properly."

His team coordinates with local officials and U.S. Army Garrison Benelux staff on contingency operations and progress updates to insure surrounding communities are safe.

"We still have 2,000-4,000 tons of World War I ordnance in Antwerp," said Savelkoels, who has been working with the Belgian EOD Battalion since 1982. "When I became a company commander, I decided to clean the big dumps," he said as he cited other ammo dumps in Gent, Lessines, near Liege. This type of work is risk reduction for each community. Complacency is my fear."

About the Meteor-Heraut

The *Meteor-Heraut* is an authorized unofficial civilian enterprise newspaper published for the U.S. Army under AR 360-1 for U.S. military personnel in the Benelux nations by the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux. Editorial content is provided by public affairs offices of the USAG Benelux, USAG Schinnen and USAG Brussels. Opinions expressed are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the USAG Benelux. Appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Defense, Department of the Army, or USAG Benelux of the products or services advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

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Policy

- We encourage letters to the editor, but they must be signed. We will consider withholding the name of the author upon request. Letters regarding an issue should contribute to informational interest.
- We reserve the right to edit all material for style, to fit available space, to resolve libel, safety or force protection issues and to correct grammar.
- Submit articles in plain text and separate photographic files, but publication depends upon the judgment of the editor.
- Event announcements must use civilian dates and times. Spell out acronyms and include a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. We cannot reproduce prepared flyers in the *Meteor-Heraut*.

Advertising

- Messages from readers from profit and non-profit organizations which involve money exchange constitutes advertising.
- Neither the *Meteor-Heraut* staff nor other public affairs personnel can accept advertising requests.
- The appearance of advertising, including inserts, does not constitute endorsement of the products or services offered.
- Any gambling or lottery requiring payment for chance cannot be advertised as stated in 18 U.S.C. 1302.
- No advertising is currently being accepted as the Meteor-Heraut completes the process of changing publishers.

Deadline

Copy and photographs are due by noon 11 calendar days before publication date.

Electronic newspaper

The *Meteor-Heraut* will be published in an electronic format until the process of acquiring a new publisher is complete.

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Meteor-Heraut Deadline and Publication Dates

Copy is due at noon			
Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date
Aug. 7	Aug. 18	Sept. 11	Sept. 22
Aug. 21	Sept. 8	Sept. 25	Oct. 6
		Oct. 9	Oct. 20
		Oct. 23	Nov. 3
		Nov. 6	Nov. 17
		Nov. 20	Dec. 1

Chièvres Garrison...serving SHAPE/Chièvres communities

Community Notes

Benelux Chaplaincy offers Family Retreat

The Benelux Family Life Chaplain, (Maj.) Jeffrey B. Walden, is hosting a one-day family retreat Aug. 5 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Benelux Family Life Center (Bldg. 13) for Soldiers, Department of Defence civilian employees and their families.

Lunch and materials will be provided. Each session uses role play, coaching and activity based skillsets to cover session designed to improve family wellness.

The sessions, jointly sponsored by Army Community Service, the Family Life Center and Social Work Services, provides attendees with:

- ❑ Tools to manage your families in healthy ways;
- ❑ Ways to encourage and support one another;
- ❑ How to bring out the best in each other and build on what already works;
- ❑ Alternatives to physical punishment;
- ❑ Skills to encourage self esteem and self confidence in parents and children.

For reservations or additional information on the family retreat, call 361-6021.

Chièvres Garrison hosts Town Hall

Chièvres Garrison and the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux staff will host its quarterly Town Hall meeting for the SHAPE and Chièvres community Sept. 20, at 6:30 p.m. at Hotel Maisières.

The purpose of the meeting is to provide a venue for the community to voice their opinions or questions to the people who furnish services. The meeting normally lasts between one and one-half hours.

Key members of the garrison leadership will be available to answer questions concerning safety, schools, housing, employment, banking, financing, health care, morale, welfare, recreation, public works, and religious support.

If you have any questions or concerns which you would like to address in advance please send them to the USAG Benelux's Plans, Integration, and Analysis Office (PAIO), Bldg 30, Daumarie Caserne or email your question to: paio@benelux.army.mil.

Questions may also be submitted via the Chièvres Garrison website <http://www.garrisonchievres.eur.army.mil>, find "Town Hall" in the *Quick Read* items and submit questions there as well.

U.S. Army NATO

Brigade gets new leadership

By J.D. Hardesty

Meteor-Heraut Editor

CASTEAU, Belgium - U.S. Army NATO Brigade's 1,600 Soldiers and civilian employees supporting NATO missions throughout Europe welcomed a new commander here, July 27.

Col. Donald H. Woolverton took command of the brigade from Col. Barry L. Swain, who commanded the U.S. Army's contingency to NATO for the past two years.

"Keep your eyes on the target," Swain told his troops as he explained commanding such a unique unit exceeded beyond his dreams.

"Commanders, first sergeants and leaders, you have my humble thanks for your support," he said to the formation of troops. "What a bunch of heroes all of you are."

Swain departs U.S. Army NATO Brigade to serve as the G-1 at Headquarters, U.S. Army Pacific Command in Hawaii.

Woolverton, who was commissioned through the Reserve Officer Training Corps from Arkansas State University in 1982, has served in various stateside and overseas staff and command positions.

He previously served as commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 29th Signal Battalion at Fort Lewis, Wash., 69th Personnel Services Company in Karlsruhe, Germany and the 203rd Personnel Services Battalion at Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

He has served in various staff positions stateside, as well as in Germany, Korea and Iraq.

The brigade traces its heritage to when it was originally organized as a special activity of the Chief of the Army in 1951.

The Brigade has three battalions, one located here to support SHAPE, a battalion to support the Joint Forces Command in Brunssum, The Netherlands and a battalion located in Naples Italy.

The units mission continues to expand as NATO takes on expanding role in Afghanistan as well as standing up Allied Rapid Reaction Corps around Europe.



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

Col. Donald H. Woolverton address U.S. Army NATO Soldiers after taking command of the brigade July 27 from Col. Barry L. Swain.

Benelux Family Life Center moves to Chièvres

By J.D. Hardesty

Meteor-Heraut Editor

The Benelux Family Life Center opened its doors on Caserne Daumerie in Chièvres in July after moving from SHAPE in Casteau, Belgium.

The new center "is roughly three times larger than the old facility," said Benelux Family Life Chaplain (Maj.) Jeff Walden, a certified American Association of Marriage and Family therapist through the Army's Family Life Program.

Increasing emphasis has been placed on Army families since the 1990s as a majority of America's fighting force is married.

"Focusing on families is a great move the Army has made," he said. "Soldiers cannot perform to their best if they have to worry about family problems back home."

According to Walden, there are a lot of challenges facing families living overseas and the support the center can provide illustrates how important Soldiers and their families are to the Army, though anyone with a SHAPE or Department of Defense identification card can receive assistance.

"With isolation being a natural part of military life, families have to work on knowing each other," he said. "We offer coach-



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

U.S. Army Benelux Family Life Center Chaplain (Maj.) Jeff Walden stands in front of the new Benelux Family Life Center on Caserne Daumerie in Chièvres. The center relocated from SHAPE in Casteau, Belgium.

blended family, conflict, anger and stress and other areas.

To continue to reach out to families, Walden explained the upstairs of the building is being revamped into a youth center with space for Club Beyond and youth retreats.

"This is a more centralized location to meet the needs of all the families living within the Benelux footprint," he said. "We have families from Geilenkirchen, Germany; Luxembourg, Italy, Schinnen, Brussels, along with families within the Chièvres community to participate in Family Life Center functions."

"We are here to make sure our Army families do not become casualties of war," he said.

ing sessions between parents and children, marriage retreats and counseling, education and youth retreat opportunities."

The new center can host up to 50 people in seminar-style classes and has a private counseling room along with office space.

Through the center, Walden offers individual, couple, family and group counseling for marriage, parenting,

USAG Schinnen...serving the tri-border community

JFC Brunssum Theater

Country music artist entertains troops

By LaDonna Davis

Schinnen Public Affairs Office

Acclaimed country-music singer-songwriter, Chely Wright, entertained more than 250 fans with her up-beat and heartfelt sounds when she made her way to the Joint Forces Command, Brunssum Theatre July 25.

For more than two hours, Wright and her band kept audience members clapping their hands and tapping their feet by singing both classic country hits and her own songs, including medleys from her most recent album, *"The Metropolitan Hotel"* which includes the hit single, *"The Bumper of My SUV"* - a song about supporting deployed Soldiers fighting the war on terrorism.

Wright's military history runs deep. With a brother currently serving with the Marines, a father who was in the Navy and a grandfather who served in the Army during World War II, Wright understands the struggles and pressures of living in a military family, but also knows the sense of pride that comes with having family members fighting for freedom.

"Grandpa was injured on the beach of Normandy and his battalion went in and a lot of his friends didn't come out," Wright recalls. "And, after the war he started drinking, he became an alcoholic and only drank when he thought of those horrible times - it was hard for him. So my memory of being a kid in my grandparents' house was 'don't ask grandpa about the war, don't talk about it.' And that perspective has compelled me to say thank-you even more to these guys and gals; and not just over here,

but going back to Walter Reed in Bethesda, (Md.), and having them come out to our shows when they're better. It's important and it's important that we never stop the thank-yous."

But Wright's commitment to entertaining service members started long before she made it big on the country music scene. In fact, it started at the tender age of nine.

As a young girl, Wright's grandfather would take her to veteran hospitals around her hometown of Kansas City and have her play for the sick and injured men and women.

"I'd have to say the most important part about the things I've gotten to do for the military and veterans is the very first time I went to a Department of Veterans Affairs hospital because that's what started to open my eyes; and I went because my grandfather told me to," Wright recalls. "He said, 'so you're going to be a country music star?' And I said 'yep,' and he said 'then you get your little keyboard and you get your little butt up to the VA hospital and you play and sing,' and I did; and from then on, it's been in me."

Ironically though, it was when she received a "vulgar hand gesture" for having a "support our troops" military sticker on the bumper of her Isuzu Trooper that inspired her hit song *"Bumper"* which became the number one single on the Billboard Country Music Chart for nine weeks straight, something Wright calls, "a pure accident."

"I came back to Nashville after playing a show in the Middle East, and like,



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Country music artist Chely Wright entertained Soldiers and family members July 25 at Joint Forces Command Brunssum Theater.

three days after my trip, a lady gave me the hand gesture and cussed me out and said 'your war is wrong,'" Wright laments. "So, I went home and I wrote the song and it sat in my home studio for like 16 months - I forgot about it. And I found it right before the guys

and I went back to the Middle East for a tour, and I did the song, just impromptu, and the crowd really reacted. So, from then on, it was something that we just added to the tour and I ended up making a recording of it and it ended up being a hit."

Though Wright admits making the song was a bit of an accident, it doesn't surprise her the song became a hit and resonated with so many people.

"I think this song is popular because in it I detail I do have questions, and I'm not political and that we get to drive around in our gas guzzling SUVs, practice our own religions and be safe on our city streets, and I think that's why the song has been so popular."

Wright has been performing nationally since 1995, and has won numerous awards from both the Academy of Country Music and the Country Music Association. But, in spite of her popularity, Wright still feels compelled to entertain military troops and their families all over the world and says she has no plans to stop.

"It's a mission for me and it has become a mission for my band as well," she says. "Although we run the gambit of political and religious beliefs, we see what it's like when we go to a military installation, whether it be in South Korea, Japan, here in Europe or Middle East, something clicks in our brain, like 'oh we have to say thank-you; it's incumbent on us to come say thank-you.' So the reasons for my continuing to do it are because it makes me feel great, and once you start doing it, you just can't stop."

AF North Bn. gets new senior enlisted leadership

By LaDonna Davis

Schinnen Public Affairs Office

The former commandant of the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant School in Fort Jackson, S.C., taken over the noncommissioned officer leadership of the Allied Forces North Battalion, U.S. Army NATO located in Brunssum, Netherlands, July 13 at the U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen Parade Field.

Command Sgt. Maj. Scottie Thomas assumed senior enlisted leadership responsibility of the battalion from Command Sgt. Maj. Lou V. Hayes-Johnson who had served with the unit since October 2004. Hayes-Johnson will be heading to Fort McPherson in Atlanta, Ga.

"Hayes-Johnson loves Soldiers. She loves helping them find solutions to their problems, she loves counseling them on their careers, and she loves talking with them about life's issues," said Lt. Col. BJ Constantine, the battalion's commander.

During her tenure, Hayes-Johnson was in charge of professionally developing more than 350 Soldiers assigned to three countries and was responsible for the leadership, training and quality of life for all Soldiers assigned to the command. She personally mentored



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Command Sgt. Maj. Scottie Thomas (facing) assumes the role of command sergeant major for the AFNORTH Battalion during a change of responsibility ceremony June 12, at the U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen Parade field.

Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year competition for 2006.

"The Army is a great organization, and in order to

sonally mentored three command leadership teams and was responsible for completely revamping the battalion's non-commissioned officer education system which is poised to yield better prepared Soldiers attending NCOES schools.

Also under her leadership and guidance, the battalion won the U.S. Army NATO

Soldier of the Year

be a professional Soldier, you have to love what you do, said Hayes-Johnson during her farewell speech. "For me, I love the Army, I love taking care of Soldiers. I've often made the statement, which is true for me, 'if you cut me, you may see red, however, I bleed Army green'."

Thomas comes to JFC Brunssum with 24 years of experience as an Army warrior. He served as the command sergeant major of the 369th Adjutant General Battalion in Fort Jackson, before becoming the commandant of the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant School.

"I'm excited for the plethora of opportunities to serve, I'm eager to contribute to the joint experience," said Thomas. "I surrender to the unquenchable thirst for high standards; I'm impatiently waiting for the many cultural experiences that this assignment offers."

"Command Sgt. Maj. Scottie Thomas brings with him a wealth of knowledge, experience and professionalism from his past assignments," said Constantine. "With each of these assignments Thomas' service record reflects stellar performance characterized by taking care of Soldiers and their families."

USAG Brussels...serving the tri-mission community

Operation Iraqi Freedom

Brussels graduate 'home' for 2 weeks R&R

By Matthew Reimann

Brussels Public Affairs Office

A Brussels American graduate returned "home" to Brussels for two weeks of R&R (rest and recuperation) from his service supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Spc. Joseph ("Thor") Fiedler, son of longtime Brussels American School (BAS) teacher and football/wrestling coach Joe Fiedler, and his wife Perla, the U.S. Army Garrison Brussels administration officer, recently spent two weeks in Brussels, having come directly from the front.

The junior Fiedler, a Wyoming National Guardsman, is currently deployed in Iraq.

There are thousands of former Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDS) students serving on Active Duty in the U.S. Armed Forces. There is nothing particularly unusual in that. The younger Fiedler, however, belongs to the very select group who can claim literally one, and only one, DoDDS school as an Alma Mater.

Born in Iceland, where his father was already a DoDDS teacher, Fiedler moved with his parents to Brussels when he was about five. "I spent K through 12 grade at BAS," he says, graduating in 1992. Describing himself as an "average" student, Fiedler also followed in his father's athletic footsteps, lettering in varsity football and wrestling.

"BAS was a great place in which to go to school," he says. "Besides its small-town school atmosphere, it was neat to be located in one of Europe's great cities," he says.

Following his BAS graduation, he headed off to Springfield College in Springfield, Mass.

Fiedler thought he would also follow in his father's teaching footsteps, but it was not to be.



PHOTO: Courtesy Joseph "Thor" Fiedler

Spc. Joseph "Thor" Fiedler, a Wyoming National Guardsman and Brussels American School graduate, returned "home" for two weeks R&R (rest and recuperation) from supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. Fiedler attended Brussels American School for 12 years.

it occurred to him that he was merely "exploiting people for their personal tragedies," he says.

Fiedler quit the television station. During his career as a Baltimore newsman, he had become particularly close to a member of the Baltimore City Police Department. He confided his reasons for leaving newscasting to his friend, who challenged him to "make a difference" by entering the law enforcement field. Fiedler was sufficiently intrigued by the idea to head west to Wyoming, where he could save money by living with an uncle while attending a less costly police academy.

Having made the move to westward, another event further decided the direction his life would to.

The attacks of Sept. 11th, 2001 happened, and Fiedler became interested in "doing his bit."

See Fiedler, page 7

Brussels Soldier wins NATO honors



PHOTO: Isabelle Gillet

U.S. Army Garrison Brussels Commander Lt. Col. Patrick Kilroy (left, front) talks to Spc. Charles T. Fridline (right) prior to awarding him the Joint Service Achievement Medal.

By Isabelle Gillet

Brussels Public Affairs Office

A U.S. Army Garrison Brussels Soldier earned the Joint Service Achievement Medal July 26 for being selected tops among enlisted troops serving in support of the U.S. Military Representative to NATO Headquarters.

Spc. Charles T. Fridline, a native of Champagne, Ill., has been stationed at Brussels for the past 18 months. The 25-year-old military police officer received the award from Lt. Col. Patrick Kilroy, Brussels garrison commander.

Why was this Soldier, on his first enlistment, receiving a non-Army decoration?

"Brussels is not an 'Army' town," Kilroy said. "From the U.S. military perspective, it's a 'Joint' and 'Inter-agency' town - just like Washington, D.C. Our U.S. Army Garrison in Brussels exists solely to serve the U.S. Joint and Inter-agency community who serve our nation at NATO Headquarters."

Fridline earned his award by competing with Brussels area U.S. service members at - the NATO Board - a colloquial term used to describe the quarterly Junior NCO and Junior Soldier, Sailor, Airman and Marine competitions held under the auspices of the U.S. Military Representative to the NATO Headquarters.

Marine Lt. Gen. Ed Hanlon, the U.S. Military Rep-

resentative to NATO, is the personal representative to the NATO Military Committee of the U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The competition is open to all U.S. service members stationed in the Brussels Capital Region.

Besides exemplary performance and having to be nominated by their respective command chains, candidates must demonstrate to a selection board composed of senior (and joint) NCOs a thorough knowledge of the NATO Alliance - what it is, how it works, and the United States' role as an Alliance member.

Unlike peers assigned to NATO Headquarters billets, Fridline was personally challenged because his "day job" MP does not bring him into direct contact with NATO HQ's daily workings.

But he persevered, studying the *NATO Handbook* in his spare time while working day and night shifts and learning about NATO from acknowledged experts.

A week prior to his appearance before the NATO Board, Fridline attended the Individual Deployment Training in Chièvres, Belgium, honing his Soldier skills for potential combat zone service.

Kilroy concluded: "This medal is the recognition of excellence. The accomplishment demonstrates, how, in the U.S. Army, we can take ourselves as far as we want to. Anywhere Fridline will go after his career in Brussels, he'll take away this pride with him."

Nijmegen...from page 1

All military personnel that were injured have been released and sent back to their units, said Blom.

Nearly 5,000 soldiers from 24 countries participated in this year's march, all of them staying at Camp Heumensoord located just outside the town of Nijmegen. The first leg of the 25-mile (40-km) march kicked off July 18 with soldiers marching while wearing a 22-pound rucksack on their back. If the march had proceeded, the soldiers would have marched a total of 100 miles (160 km).

Though none of the U.S. military personnel were seriously injured, the sting of not being able to complete the highly anticipated and challenging trek still runs deep for many of the participating Soldiers.

"I think it sucks because I'd have liked to finish it, but I know that there are certain circumstances why they cut it off and it's a good thing they did," said Spc. Darren Bland, from U.S. Army Garrison Brussels. "I'm PCSing (permanent change of station) in eight months, so I won't get to come back next year and I would have liked to have finished it and have gotten the chance to say I did finish it and complete it."

"I'm disappointed because we did a lot of training and we came up here with an objective to march four days, 160 km, and we only met a quarter of that," said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Bly, from USAG Vicenza, Italy. "I wasn't surprised when I heard about the deaths because it was very hard and it was very hot. Everybody, everybody was hurting."

Though the cancellation of the march is a letdown for those participating Soldiers, some consider it a learning experience and are optimistic for next year.



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Spc. Sebastien Raseman with the 21st Theater Support Command, Kaiserslautern, Germany, shows off his walking wounds after marching for approximately 10 hours and 40 kilometers on day one of the Nijmegen March. Though the march was cancelled, many Soldiers still felt the pains of the march in their feet.

A day before the march began, Spc. Sebastien Raseman with the 21st Theater Support Command, Kaiserslautern, Germany said, he and his team mates had been training for this Nijmegen march for months and by marching, he hoped to test his limits. "I like doing things that are crazy and stupid and I like to see how far I can go," he said "We've been training for the past three months, marching instead of PT (physical training) for about two hours everyday and every other weekend we try to march about 12 to 14 miles."

But after marching for a day and getting a nasty blister on his foot, Raseman has learned, that when it comes to Nijmegen, there can never be enough training.

"I feel it's pretty crappy that the march was cancelled, but my feet are pretty happy," said Raseman, one day later. "I want to come back next year with what I learned from this one day. I think I need to train more, probably do more than 40 kilometers throughout my training and also a little bit more strategy while walking."

Even though the march only lasted

one day, it gave the marchers a glimpse into what the other three days would have been like if the march would have continued, and according to some, it would have been tough.

"I'm kind of pleased (the march was cancelled), but unsatisfied because I was expecting to be here all week, but the one day was tough, especially at the end," said Spc. Andrew Rusch, from Wuerzburg U.S. Army Medical Department Activity, Germany. "It was hot and I was covered in sweat the whole time, we had to drink a lot of water. I probably would have been stumbling if the march had continued."

U.S. military teams stationed in different parts of Europe and hailing from different branches of the military, which include the Air Force, the Army and the Navy, participated in this year's march.

And while the march's cancellation was a disappointment for all the troops involved, for the USAG Benelux team, which consisted of Soldiers stationed at one of the three garrisons in the Benelux community - USAG Brussels, Chièvres Garrison and USAG Schinnen - the one day they got to march left them feeling quite good about their accomplishments since they were the first team to make it back to camp.

"I would have probably lost a few nails and had a few blisters, but I would have made it," said Master Sgt. Michael Kirkemo, from USAG Schinnen. "Our whole team would have made it, we were the first ones out and the first ones in."

Though this marks the first cancellation of the march, during the years 1914 and 1915 and from 1940-1945 no marches were held due to wars.

Fiedler...from page 6

A local friend spoke to him of the Wyoming National Guard, which he joined in December of 2002.

Since that time, Fiedler has gone through basic training, been assigned to a Wyoming National Guard field artillery unit, graduated from the police academy (his Guard benefits helped pay the tuition), obtained work as a policeman in Cheyenne, Wyo., and continued fulfilling his National Guard requirements on selected weekends.

In December 2005, his unit was sent to Fort Lewis, Wash., for four months of rigorous training in preparation for going to Iraq.

Fiedler's unit has been in Iraq since April.

"We relieved a Puerto Rican National Guard unit," he says. During the "turnover" period, members of his unit went on patrol with elements of the outgoing unit.



PHOTO: Courtesy of Brussels Public Affairs Office

Spc. Joseph "Thor" Fiedler (center), a 1992 graduate of Brussels American School and a Wyoming National Guardsman, is reunited with his parents, Joe Fiedler Brussels American School teacher and football and wrestling coach and Perla, an administration officer with U.S. Army Garrison Brussels, during his two weeks of R&R (rest and recuperation) from supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Our pre-deployment training was good," says Fiedler, "But we learned it was out of date. That's not the fault of

the trainers, but the result of the constantly changing and evolving tactical situation."

In common with Soldiers

from many other branches, Fiedler's unit is not being employed in its field artillery capacity.

His particular unit happens to have a large number of Soldiers who are law enforcement officers in civilian life.

"That's a huge advantage out here," he says. Asked for observations, Fiedler mentioned that improvised explosive devices are on everyone's mind.

"A few days ago, I picked up my girlfriend, who flew in to Brussels Airport. I was driving her to my parents' home when she turned to me and asked why I was driving in the middle of the road. Habits are hard to shake," he says.

Fiedler is now back in Iraq.

Asked whether he had any messages to impart, this BAS alumnus has one for students in his old school: "Listen to your teachers. They want the best for you. I didn't know it at the time, but my teachers had an extraordinary influence on my life." And, if you're an athlete, listen to Coach Fiedler...

Engagement Skills Trainer arms Schinnen Soldiers

By LaDonna Davis

Schinnen Public Affairs
Office

Soldiers will now be able to train and test their shooting skills in the confinement of four walls due to a new Engagement Skills Trainer being installed July 12 in the U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen Sports Center.

The trainer offers simulated weapon training situations which allows Soldiers to hone their shooting skills and receive immediate feedback by using firearms which look, feel, weigh and recoil like their real-life counterparts.

"The engagement skills trainer allows Soldiers to get more comfortable with shooting a firearm and mechanically zeroing their weapon," said Staff Sgt. Antonio Mariscal-Guzman, Schinnen's trained EST operator. "It also gives Soldiers a chance to qualify on nuclear biological and chemical firing, become familiar with night-firing and practice for their bi-yearly M-16 weapons qualification.

"By having the skills trainer, the Army is able to save



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Staff Sgt. Antonio Mariscal-Guzman does some target practice with an M-9 pistol by using the Engagement Skills Trainer which was installed July 12 at USAG Schinnen's Sports Center to simulate a firing range.

money because it doesn't require any ammunition," he said. "Soldiers can shoot as many rounds as they need too and still get the same training and feel the same effects as they would if they were out on a firing range with a real M-16 because the simulated weapons weight and recoil feel like the real weapons."

The EST is the only small arms training system validated by the U.S. Army Infantry School and is the most accu-

rate weapons training system available today.

The device provides training for marksmanship skills, squad level collective skills, and judgmental shoot-don't shoot tactics through a number of different shooting situations which replicate everything from battlefield scenarios to bank robberies.

Training can be performed on various weapons including rifles, pistols, machine guns, shotguns, anti-tank weapons,

and grenade launchers.

Currently, the skills trainer at Schinnen is equipped with an M-9 pistol, an M-16 A2 rifle and an M-240 B machine gun. There are plans to bring in an M-203 grenade launcher and an M-4 carbine.

At the end of each training scenario, Soldiers are given an after action review which provides immediate feedback on their firing skills; something Mariscal-Guzman said is an invaluable tool for

Soldiers.

"The more practice you get, the better you get at shooting," he said. "Most Soldiers, when they first come in, they're not comfortable with a weapon, they're scared of it. So, the more you shoot, the better you feel, and, because this is unlimited ammunition they can just shoot and shoot and shoot until they get better at it.

"The device also allows me, the operator, to get immediate feedback on what the Soldier's doing wrong, whether he's jerking the trigger or if he's not keeping a steady position or if he's not breathing right, it gives me the feedback that I need so that I can correct the Soldier which is how they get better - by becoming familiar with what they're doing wrong when they shoot," he said.

In order for Soldiers to use the device, a trained operator must be present at all times with a prior appointment.

Currently, Mariscal-Guzman is the only trained operator in the garrison, though more Soldiers will be trained in the coming months.

"No matter what a Soldier's rank or position, they can benefit from this machine," he said.

For more information on Schinnen's Engagement Skills Trainer, call DSN 364-6024 or DSN 360-7381.

News Flash

Training Support Centers share phone number

Grafenwoehr - JMTC's Training Support Activity Europe announced a standardized phone number for training support in Europe - DSN 1398.

The training support centers located at Chièvres and Schinnen may be reached by dialing the local DSN plus extension 1398.

The standardized phone numbers are designed to improve customer service throughout Europe.

The Training Support Activity has created a regional association of numbers so no matter which DSN is used; the last four numbers - 1398 - will connect the caller to the closest training support center.

In Chièvres or Schinnen, dial the DSN prefix 361 or 360 respectively plus the extension 1398, to be connected to the training support center to receive training support for Training Support Activity ranges, local training areas, training aids, devices, and simulators.

Benelux team to tackle 4 Days of Yser

The U.S. Army Garrison Benelux is fielding a team to participate in the Four Days of the Yser International March held on the Belgian coast Aug. 23-26.

The walk starts and finishes each day in the cities of Oostduinkerke, Poperinge, Diksmuide and Ieper respectively, with nearly 6,100 participants daily.

The march is designed to:

- Enhance the relation between the Belgian Armed Forces and the nation by bringing the military and the civilians together during a common sports event;

- Commemorate the casualties of both World Wars and in particular those who fell on the Westhoek battlefields during World War I.

- Promote the historical and tourist assets of the Westhoek

Military and civilian participants walk side-by-side during the Four Days of the Yser covering a daily walking distance of 16 kilometers or 32 kilometers and coincides with several military ceremonies, including the one held at Diksmuide on Aug. 25 at 6 p.m. - a Belgian, French, Canadian and U.S. commemoration in with the USAG Benelux Color Guard team participates annually.

The 34th edition of the Belgian Armed Forces International event offers several participating options from one-day, walk-only participation; to the entire package of either 4 x 16 km (mini walk) or 4 x 32 km (classic walk) with lodging and meals.

Initially, the march began in 1967 when the horse fishermen organized a one day march to honor the shrimp fishermen on horseback and promote the Westhoek, the western part of the Belgian coast and the Yser River.

As the number of participants grew year after year, the organizers requested the support of the Belgian Armed Forces.

In 1972, the Belgian Forces organized the "Three days of the

Westhoek" in cooperation with the Air Defense Artillery School. The next year, the Belgian Forces increased the march to a four day event in with more than 1,200 walkers taking part.

The Four Days of the Yser traditionally ends at Ieper with the playing of the "Last Post at the Menenpoort" at 3:15 p.m. and a parade of the participants on the Ieper main square.

Details and instructions on how to register for the event are available on-line at www.vierdaagse.be. Registration deadline is Aug. 11.

For additional information on how to join the USAG Benelux team, call 361-5618 or 361-5419.



PHOTO: Courtesy Vierdaagse van de Yser

The Four Days of the Yser always end at Ieper. Above picture was taken during last year's concluding ceremony at the Menenpoort at Ieper.